DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 431 476 JC 990 401

AUTHOR	Puyear, Don
TITLE	A Community College--University Transfer System for Arizona.
INSTITUTION	Arizona State Board of Directors for Community Colleges, Phoenix.
PUB DATE	1994-01-04
NOTE	15p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Articulation (Education); College Transfer Students; *Community Colleges; Curriculum Guides; Higher Education; Program Implementation; Program Improvement; Transfer Policy; *Transfer Programs; Universities
IDENTIFIERS	*Arizona Community Colleges

ABSTRACT

The State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona is in the process of strengthening and formalizing its university transfer system. This document presents an outline of one possible community college-university transfer system based upon existing agreements and procedures in place. One of the key features of the system is an Automated Transfer Program Guide to provide accurate, reliable, and timely information on how a student's community college transcript would be evaluated for transfer into the academic programs at the state's public universities. One of the first steps is to transform the current paper-based course equivalency guide into electronic format in order to ease maintenance and expand its usability. Curriculum check-sheets that describe the courses a student should take during their first two years at a community college to be eligible to transfer are already being implemented. Electronic versions of these would become the source of program information for the Automated Transfer Program Guide. An automated transfer program guide would allow students to enter the courses they have taken at a community college, and then receive an immediate response about which of those courses will transfer to a particular program at a specific university. The guide would also make recommendations about what additional courses students should complete at a community college. Additionally, the automated transfer program guide could be used for other functions, such as electronic transmission of transcripts. (TGO)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 431 476

A Community College – University Transfer System for Arizona

State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona
3225 North Central Avenue, Suite 1220
Phoenix, Arizona 85012-2411
Phone: (602) 255-4037, FAX: (602) 279-3464

Executive Director's Concept Paper
January 1993

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
D. Puyear
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

JC 900 401

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

State Board of Directors for Community Collges of Arizona

A Community College – University Transfer System for Arizona

Arizona's universities and community colleges have laid a strong foundation upon which to build an exemplary community college–university transfer system. The procedures for maintaining a comprehensive Course Equivalency Guide are in place and working well. Other elements required for a comprehensive transfer system, described in the following pages, are also present to at least a limited extent. There are few states better positioned to complete a voluntary transfer articulation system that really works. But there are still obstacles to overcome before Arizona's community college–university transfer system can be said to be fully functioning.

The following pages contain an outline of one possible community college–university transfer system based on an extension of existing agreements and procedures. This system would include an automated transfer program guide to provide accurate, reliable, and timely information on how a student's community college courses will be evaluated for transfer into the various academic programs at the three public universities in the state.

Not all of the matters suggested in this paper have yet been agreed upon by all parties. This paper is not intended to describe what now is. Rather, it is a vision of what might be accomplished within the context and spirit of the present agreements. It is an illustration of how the parts presently available can be melded together to make a functioning whole. It is offered in the hope and expectation that the community colleges and the universities will now boldly move to create the electronic course equivalency guide and the electronic curriculum check-sheets that will enable the functioning of an automated transfer guide.

The Development of An Automated Transfer Program Guide

A Course Equivalency Guide that describes how each university evaluates each course offered at

a community college is the first essential element of a successful community college–university articulation system. Arizona has such a course equivalency guide, and has an established procedure for keeping it up-to-date and reliable. One cannot overstate the importance of this accomplishment. It is the foundation upon which the rest of the system rests.

A Curriculum Check-Sheet that describes the courses that should be taken during the freshman and sophomore year, with the recommended and allowable substitutions delineated, is the next essential element of a successful community college–university articulation system. The Arizona public universities have developed such check-sheets, with a variety of titles, for several of the most active transfer programs. By merging the program check-sheet with the course equivalency guide, it is possible to describe the recommended course of study for any given university program in terms of a particular community college's courses.

A listing of the student's actual or proposed course of study at a community college, when checked against the program check-sheet translated into a particular community college's nomenclature, can be used to find out what courses will transfer into the particular university program in question, and what additional courses are recommended for the freshman and sophomore year in that program.

Automated Transfer Program Guide

In its simplest form, an automated transfer program guide would allow a student to enter the courses that he/she has taken at a community college and receive an immediate response, both on the screen and—when desired—on a printout, about which of those courses will transfer to a particular program at a specific university and what additional courses are recommended to complete the first two years of the program. This would be accomplished by a computer program running on a personal computer that would address appropriate curriculum check-sheets and course equivalency guides housed in the computer's memory or hard disk.

At the present stage of articulation it is not possible to generalize the transferability of a course beyond a specific program at a specific university. A given community college course may be

considered differently with respect to similar programs at the different universities or with respect to different programs at the same university. The automated transfer program guide must reflect this reality.

An Electronic Course Equivalency Guide

A Course Equivalency Guide is a table that describes how each university evaluates each course submitted by a community college. The Arizona Postsecondary Commission publishes a Course Equivalency Guide (CEG) in a booklet format for the three public universities and the public community colleges annually under the guidance of the CEG Steering Committee. This committee includes representatives of the Arizona Board of Regents, the State Community College Board, all three universities, and the community colleges. The CEG Steering Committee is assisted by several Articulation Task Forces (ATF's), which include both university and community college faculty in a given discipline, which oversee the evaluation of courses in that discipline.

The Joint Conference Committee, a body consisting of three members of the Arizona Board of Regents and three members of the State Board of Directors for Community Colleges of Arizona, plus the President and Chairman of the respective boards has among its responsibilities editorial oversight of the CEG.

Transition from the paper-based Course Equivalency Guide to an electronic version will both ease the maintenance of the guide and greatly expand its usability. The development of an electronic CEG will be an essential initiating step in the development of an Automated Transfer Program Guide.

A proposed Electronic Course Equivalency Guide (ECEG) is a table or data base maintained in a computer-readable format. A new ECEG would be published for each academic year, and will remain unchanged after publication. The ECEG description of the equivalency of community college courses to university courses will be honored for all courses taken during the academic year for which the ECEG is published. If a student attends a community college during more than one academic year, it will be necessary to consult two or more editions of the ECEG to assess the transferability of the courses taken by the community college student.

Changes for the next edition of the ECEG will begin to be assembled immediately after the publication of the previous edition. These changes, however, will not become effective until the following academic year, when another edition of the ECEG will have been distributed.

The ECEG could be published on diskettes for downloading onto a personal computer hard disk.

In all likelihood, the ECEG editorial functions would be simplified by a carefully defined group of people having access to the changes proposed for the subsequent edition of the ECEG via a communications network (which might be maintained through dial-up modems, or through an emerging computer network). The development of on-line editorial capability is suggested as a high-priority enhancement of the overall transfer system.

An Electronic Curriculum Check Sheet

A Curriculum Check-Sheet or Transfer Guide is a table that lists the courses that should be taken during the freshman and sophomore year for transfer into a university program as a Junior. Recommended and allowable substitutions are delineated. Arizona public universities have developed such check-sheets for several of the most active transfer programs.

An Electronic Curriculum Check-Sheet would be a computer-readable version of the present paper-based publications, which are available for several the most often used transfer programs. These electronic check-sheets should be written in terms of the courses at the university. When converted to a community college's nomenclature by use of the Electronic Course Equivalency Guide, these check-sheets would become the source of program information for the Automated Transfer Program Guide.

Each university would be responsible for maintenance of Electronic Curriculum Check-Sheets for its undergraduate programs. Curriculum Check-Sheets may be changed annually, and should be republished simultaneously with the ECEG. The Curriculum Check-Sheet in effect at the time a student began his or her studies remains in effect for that student while the student actively pursues his

or her course of study. If the student does not maintain continuous enrollment the Curriculum Check-Sheet in effect when the student resumes his or her program would become applicable.

A Transfer General Education Core Curriculum (TGECC) of 41 semester credit hours has been agreed upon by each university for each community college. This TGECC, or golden core as it is sometimes called, is a set of courses that are to transfer as a block and are to satisfy the university lower-division general education requirements. Each Curriculum Check-Sheet should show the equivalent block of general education requirements for which the TGECC will transfer as a block. If the TGECC has not been completed, the transfer evaluation will be, of necessity, on a course-by-course basis. (There may be some professional programs for which the TGECC is not fully applicable. Any such exempted programs should be specifically identified by the Arizona Board of Regents and the Electronic Curriculum Check-Sheet for each such program should delineate how the TGECC will be interpreted.)

The development and maintenance of an Electronic Curriculum Check-Sheet for each undergraduate university program will need to become an extremely high priority for the Arizona Board of Regents. Leadership and direction from the Regents will likely be necessary for this critical element of the transfer system to be accomplished. The system obviously cannot function without the information contained in these check-sheets.

Future Extensions and Enhancements of the Transfer

Once the Course Equivalency Guide has been transformed into an electronic format, the Curriculum Check-Sheets have been prepared in computer format, and the basic Automated Transfer Program Guide has been implemented, as described in this paper, there will remain several enhancements that would make transfer easier for both the students and the institutions involved. The design of the Automated Transfer Program Guide should anticipate the needs of these future enhancements, which include the following:

An On-Line Transfer Course Evaluation System should be developed to simplify the maintenance of the Course Equivalency Guide. This system would be an extension of the

present paper-based CEG editorial process, and is alluded to in the discussion of the CEG earlier in this paper.

An Associate Degree Audit Function should be added to the Automated Transfer Program Guide so that the student will be informed of the courses required to complete his or her degree and the courses recommended for transfer.

Electronic Transmission of Transcripts would be a natural extension of this process. The American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) has developed a standard method for exchanging data about students named SPEEDE. This standard should be observed as plans for future electronic transmission of transcripts are contemplated.

Donald E. Puyear, January 3, 1994